



## WEST SUSSEX WOODTURNERS

### MARCH 2022 NEWSLETTER

*An Associated Club of the AWGB*

Ian opened the meeting with a couple of announcements, firstly our events evening is due to be held on 13<sup>th</sup> May in the hall starting around 7.30p.m. Food and soft drinks will be supplied but those requiring additional fortification must bring their own beverages. A competition is run on the night. The rules of the competition are I believe as follows:

*Open to all members who may enter up to a maximum of 4 items.*

*Any item incorporating turned elements can be entered, including those entered in previous Club competitions, though items **must not** have been entered previously in an Awards Evening competition.*

*The invited Judge will not be a practising woodturner. There will be a First, a Second, and a Third prize based on the Judges' assessment of which items he or she would most like to own in order of priority. The Judge's decisions will be final in all matters and will not be the subject of discussion, apart from that of a general nature for the benefit of the Club members generally. They will give reasons for their preference.*

Secondly Chestnut Finishes are running another of their Weekenders on 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> July in Swindon. Check their website for full details.

My thanks go to Alan Wallington for supplying loads of photos of today's demonstration and also to my daughter Beth for giving up her Sunday to come and take the notes for the Newsletter and take some photos.

And so we come to the main event of the day a demonstration by:

**Chris Fisher aka The Blind Turner.**

This was our first professional demo since March 2020.



Chris describes himself as a Woodturning Artist; he is definitely not a production turner. If you want to see more of Chris he is on Instagram, YouTube and will shortly be on a programme called “Money for Nothing”.

Chris has been blind for about 13 years. He literally became legally blind overnight and went completely blind in 4 weeks. The doctors told him the blindness was caused by infected animal faeces (it’s called Toxoplasmosis), which had laid dormant for years and then ate his retinas. He decided to make himself a Vampire stake (he’s a horror fan). He was self-taught initially having listened to hundreds of hours of YouTube instructional videos. He then moved on to bowls. Nick Agar also gave him some lessons. His first public demo was at an Axminster shop.

The first project was to be a textured and coloured platter/bowl. The timber was Sycamore. The texturing and carving makes his work to a sensory level. Chris uses touch and sound as senses – sound = safety as the sound will change as you turn.

Chris fixes the blank on a faceplate as for him this is safer than a screw chuck. He will then make a mortise with a raised foot for the base. Chris came up with an idea to help him ensure that his mortise /Tenon were always the right size. Axminster now market this as the Axminster Woodturning Speed Sizer. If you haven’t seen one check the Axminster website. He then makes a score mark in the wood for the mortise as obviously a pencil line wouldn’t work for him.

He then made another reference point about an inch across for foot. He then uses a square carbide tool for cleaning up the mortis, mainly because it is easy for him to feel than a traditional gouge.

Chris used a ½ inch bowl gouge for the edges and switched to a 3/8 bowl gouge for the centre part to get close to the foot.

He was aiming for a Catenary curve. For those who missed it in physics and geometry a catenary curve is the curve that an idealised hanging chain or cable assumes under its own weight when supported only at its ends in a uniform gravitational field, (if you are still none the wiser ask an engineer).



He evened up the curve and flattened the foot using a Scraper. As he was going to carve the piece it does not need to be a completely smooth finish. (Ah Ha Stewart Furini that gives the game away).

He then straightened up the edge of the foot using a Square scraper. Using a small Spiral texturing tool he textured the inside of the foot to show that he had done some work on it. He counts to ensure that the texture depth is the same. The Sorby texturing tool was invented by Tracy Owen.



Using a long necked mini grinder with a Sabre tooth carbide cutter he textures the surface. He tends to go North, East, South and Westish. The Sabre tooth leaves rough edges so he uses an abrasive brush to smooth it all down. The brush is a Rolec M3.

He now has to turn the bowl round to complete the inside. He was going to use Axminster C jaws.

Chris puts the bowl in the jaws and tightens them up and then removes the faceplate. The advantage of doing it this way is that whilst the faceplate is on you have a convenient handle to hang onto.



**HOT TIP:** Make a series of grooves in the timber no more than 1/2 mm deep as this will stop the gouge slipping.

Chris hollowed out the bowl with a Carbide tool – it's quicker for him as he doesn't need to find the bevel and it's probably safer.

At this point Chris asked if anyone wanted a go as a blind turner, so they could understand the difference between a traditional gouge and a Carbide tool. Luckily we have one audience member who was willing to try. I'm pleased to say that Terry Hooper came away with no visible sign of injury.



The next step was to ensure that the depth of the bowl was correct. Chris has his own depth gauge.



The base board is two parts the smaller part goes against the head stock and goes to the front of the jaws. It has a dowel which is aligned with the centre point. The gap between the two base boards is the depth of the bowl.

Chris then sanded the bowl using a Sanding wax made of Bees wax, Lavender oil and mineral oil.

He applied the Sanding sealer followed by Yorkshire Grit and finally Chestnut Friction polish. One of Chris's mottos is "Don't be greedy for finish".

The next step was to colour the bowl. Chris was using a primer called Road Rash which gives a slightly rough texture. He then painted over with Rustina Copper paint before spraying with a copper aging effect, Leave the Road Rage to dry for about 15 minutes or use a hair dryer to speed things up. The reactor should be sprayed on whilst the paint is still wet. The seal with lacquer.



The base of the completed bowl.

The next part was a demonstration of Cromacraft stencils and inlays as invented by Nick Agar. If you want to see additional demos on these products Colwin Way has 3 videos on the Axminster Woodworking Wisdom YouTube, which were done back in October 2021.

Chris was going to air brush these. He had a Timbertech compressor.

The best finish is lacquer. When using Spirit stains start light and get darker.



First off you put on the base outline and then you add any extra bits you want to produce the image you want.

## MEMBERS SHOW AND TELL TABLE:



These 3 were all by Ray Thompson



This was from Dave Newson. The apples were by Ian Rudge.

## LATHES FOR SALE

Following a meeting of the Amberley Committee this morning, the decision has been made to sell the 2 large lathes at the museum to make space and to raise funds towards the new extraction building.

Details of the two lathes:

Lathe 1 - Axminster Lathe M950, 1/2 HP, (1"x 8 thread) - equivalent new value about £629.00  
£250 to WSWT Members

Lathe 2 - Axminster/Jet Lathe JWL1442VS, 1 HP, (1"x 8 thread) - equivalent new value about £1500  
£350 to WSWT Members.

If not sold by April 30th these will be advertised externally at a non discounted price.

If interested please contact Scot Grant

**NEXT MONTH:** A floor demo on Involute turning.